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# Army-wide Threatened and Endangered Species Survey

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## Introduction

This technical note provides an overview of the development, purpose, and scope of the 1996 Threatened and Endangered Species (TES) survey of Army installations. It includes a brief description of the questions asked in the survey, an explanation of how the survey will be conducted, and an indication of how the information collected may be used.

## Background

The Army needs to maintain a reliable source of TES information applicable to a broad range of Army-wide uses. The Army must comply with the Endangered Species Act, which requires that Federal agencies not undertake actions that might harm TES. This requirement affects a variety of activities, such as conservation planning, administrative decisionmaking and planning, and installation management.

In the past few years, the Army has received requests from Congress for TES data on short notice. A number of circum-

stances, such as pending environmental legislation, hearings on the Endangered Species Act, and concerns about possible burden to the military of meeting TES requirements may result in Congressional hearings. The Army needs to be able to respond to such data requests quickly and efficiently, preferably with current data that has already been collected and analyzed. Besides responding to *ad hoc* Congressional inquiries, the Army must report annual TES costs to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for their designated annual expenditure report for threatened and endangered species.

Surveys of TES were conducted on the majority of Army installations in 1992 and 1995. Based on experience with these surveys, previously-asked questions have been refined and new questions added. The 1996 survey is a comprehensive TES survey instrument applicable to a broad range of Army-wide uses. Standardized annual data collection will allow the Army to respond to mandated information requests, plan for and manage TES at the installation level, and track the progress of TES management Army-wide.

## Process

### *Survey Development and Administration*

The 1996 TES Survey has been developed through a process of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of past surveys and developing a new survey incorporating feedback from installations, MACOMs, the Army Environmental Center (AEC), and Army Headquarters. The focus was on building a consensus-based survey instrument that would be responsive to Army reporting needs at all levels, particularly the MACOM level. Forces Command (FORSCOM), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Army Materiel Command (AMC), and National Guard Bureau (NGB) were involved in all stages of planning and testing the survey instrument.

Initially, the major MACOMs, Headquarters, and several installations were asked about their TES data needs, how they collected and maintained such data, and how they intended to use it. Agreement was reached on core content areas, and then drafts of survey questions were circulated for feedback. Questions went through four major revisions, culminating in a consensus-building workshop, before agreement was reached on question content, wording, and the format of the survey. Fine-tuning occurred after the survey was pretested at several installations.

In a departure from previous TES surveys, installations and MACOMs will input their answers directly into a spreadsheet, rather than responding on a paper questionnaire. Respondents will be provided with a set of three Excel spreadsheets, complete with

sample data, and a set of complete instructions for each question. A list of the species reported on installations in 1992 and 1995 is also provided. This list has been checked for spelling with the Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered species. Installations will be able to cut and paste the names of species currently occurring on their installation from this list into the spreadsheets. This will reduce data verification problems due to uncertainty about the spelling of scientific names. Allowing installations to enter their own data also eliminates a level of error introduced when a second party enters data from hand-written answers on questionnaires. Direct data entry will simplify the data checking and quality control once the survey process is complete.

The survey instrument is being fielded to U.S. Army installations nationwide. Surveys will be sent out by and returned to the MACOMs. A tasking memo will accompany the survey. The commander of each installation will forward the survey to appropriate personnel. A team approach is required for the survey, with input needed from environmental personnel, trainers, testers, and legal and/or compliance experts working together to answer the questions. After completing the survey, the team will return it to the commander, who will forward the completed spreadsheets back to the MACOMs. MACOMs will have the opportunity to look over responses, extract data of interest, and then forward it to the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories (USACERL) for checking and analysis. After responding to the USFWS data call, researchers will prepare the final report.

### ***Timeline for survey administration***

Surveys sent to field	Sep 1996
Survey returned from field	Oct 1996
Cleaning, verification, compilation complete	Nov 1996
Preliminary analysis/USFWS data call	Dec 1996
Final analysis/USACERL report	Jun 1997

### **Scope of the Survey**

The 1996 TES Survey is intended to be a 100% survey of Army installations in the United States. It will require input from environmental, testing, training and legal/compliance personnel. The survey focuses on three major topic areas: species occurrence, TES management, and restrictions. Taken together these three topic areas provide a core of essential data about the presence and impact of TES species on Army installations.

The first of the topic areas is species occurrence. These questions focus on the presence of Federal and state-listed TES species on the installation. Questions include species name (scientific and common name), category (bird, mammal, plant, etc.), Federal status, whether the species is state listed, whether the species occurs on the installation or near it, and whether the species is known to occur on the installation or only suspected to occur on the installation.

The second topic area includes questions concerning management of TES species. These include questions on the presence of an Endangered Species Management Plan for the species, costs of managing the

species, whether Biological Assessments have been prepared for the species, whether various types of consultations have been undertaken with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the species, and whether any official decisions regarding the species have been rendered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The final topic area addresses restrictions and impacts to training and testing due to the presence of TES species. For each species causing restrictions, the respondent is presented with a list of training/testing activities, and asked to indicate which of the activities are restricted due to the species. Questions are also asked about impact of restrictions due to the species, number of acres affected by the restriction, and overall impact of all TES species on the training/testing activities on the installation.

### **Survey Format**

The survey will be provided to the installations as four Excel files (Identify.xls, Main.xls, Restrict.xls, and Species.xls) and a set of instructions in WordPerfect 5.2/MS Word 6.0 (Instruct.xxx). The first three spreadsheets, Identify, Main, and Restrict, are the sheets into which the installations will enter their answers. Identify.xls contains identifying information about the installation. Main.xls contains the questions from the first two content areas, species occurrence and management, while Restrict.xls includes the restrictions questions. The fourth spreadsheet, Species.xls, contains a list of Federally and state-listed species reported on installations in surveys

conducted in 1992 and 1995. Installations are instructed that they can use this list as the basis for reporting currently occurring species.

## **Survey Applicability**

The TES survey is designed to provide useful information at every level of the Army, from installations to MACOMs to headquarters. By filling out the survey directly in Excel, the installations create a database of information for their own future use. After data have been cleaned and checked, clean copies of the data will be distributed to the MACOMs for all of the installations within their jurisdiction. Headquarters will receive data for all installations. Results of the survey will be presented in a USACERL report, which will be made available to all participants.

The data will provide a means for responding to information requests at every level within the Army and from outside agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Congress. The survey will be repeated

annually and archived. This archived copy will provide a tracking system over time for observing trends in such issues as number of TES, how they are being managed, and their impact on the training and testing missions. This should allow managers and policymakers at every level to make informed decisions about management of Threatened and Endangered Species on Army lands.

## **Point of Contact**

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